

Lecture 17 # 16 -- November 21, 1988 cover

Address
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This was the third year that the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases had a national forum and the first year that they awarded the Maxwell Finland Award. I was it's first recipient. I noted that Dr. Finland had played a very important role in the evolution of modern medical practice, and having known him and his writings and the kind of scientist he was, I was especially grateful for the evening's honor. (I became more grateful as time went on, when I saw the list of illustrious people who were later recipients of the Maxwell Finland Award:)

I acknowledged many of my colleagues from the Public Health Service and talked a little about their service and that of civil servants. Indeed, it was because of an organization such as the U.S. Public Health Service and because of its excellence that I was there that night and I thought I might spend the few minutes I had at the microphone to acknowledge my debt and my affection for an excellent organization and the people who kept it so.

Then, accomplishments were easy to recount but also, I expressed the belief that we had a special challenge before us, at this time in our history, when personal freedom and personal responsibility were in a somewhat uneasy balance.

I suggested that we needed to find ways – effective, yet consistent with American tradition – ways to help young people – school children – develop a healthy sense of their own personal worth, as well as a genuine appreciation of the worth of everyone else. That could be the most important contribution we could make to the health of all Americans who were to come of age in the next century.